

CPA FLIGHT LINES



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SB2C Helldiver fires up for flight.



Unusual Attitudes

By Marty Brophy, CPA President

Recreating data I reported about 2.5 years ago, I spent some time lately at the useful and informative web site of the Federal Aviation Agency, <https://www.faa.gov>. Lots of good flight training, safety, and regulation information there, including the Wings program which can save you money on insurance. But it also has pilot statistics compiled at the end of each year at https://www.faa.gov/data_research/aviation_data_statistics/civil_airmen_statistics/. With a little crunching of their data, I found that as of 12/31/2020 (the latest data available), the 50 states, District of Columbia, and U.S. Territories had an estimated 691,691 active pilots. And Colorado had 20,978 pilots as of that date, 3.0% of the total. The 3 highest pilot counts were in FL (10.5%), CA (9.6%), and TX (8.7%) for the curious out there.



One interesting development is shown in the chart to the right. Student pilots have grown to over 32% of all pilots from 19% ten years ago! No wonder the traffic patterns and practice approaches are so crowded...

The data goes on and on for number cruncher nerds like me! The data for 2020 (2011) shows that women are 8.5 % (6.7%) of all active pilots and 5.7% (5.3%) of all non-student pilots but 14.2% (12.4%) of all student pilots. Very slowly improving but why do some many women not move from student to active private pilots?

In Colorado, 28.2% of active pilots are students (5,926), with women 16.8 % of the student total (998). In a more technical vein, 316,651 (45.8%) of estimated active pilots have instrument ratings. Given all the smoke getting in our eyes lately, you might want to join that number or regain proficiency flying IFR soon!

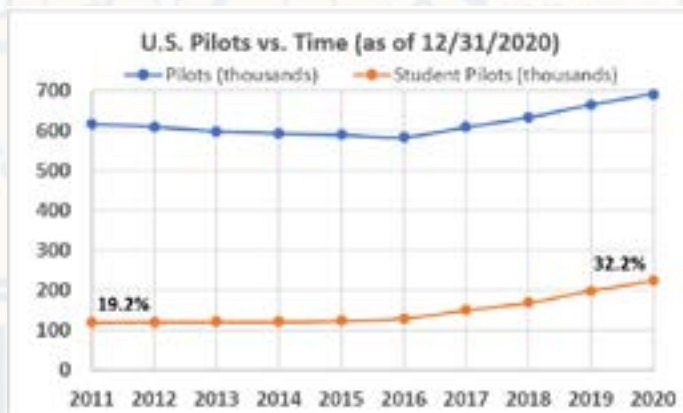
Anyone coming up with any interesting stats from this data, let me know and I'll report it in next month's president's page!

Meanwhile, our Colorado Pilots Association has 640 active members, so only 3.1% of Colorado pilots. We would like to increase that! Encourage your friends to join us and take advantage of the benefits of being a CPA member, see our website <https://coloradopilots.org/> under "About Us" on the home page for a list of benefits.

The CPA exists for its members and is run by volunteer members. We are always looking for members to help! If you would like to get involved in the organization, contact me at president@coloradopilots.org and tell me what you might like to do, and we can discuss.

Nominations from the membership for elected offices or recommendations to the board for candidates are overdue but we can be flexible if you missed the date... Please consult the bylaws on the web page for details of how to make a nomination. Voting will take place by e-mail prior to the annual meeting in November.

The smoke is as bad as ever, or worse, but the heat is starting to abate! Get up in the air on a day when you can see more than a few miles and get ready for the Fall flying season. Sooner or later, those fires die out! We hope! Blue skies and tailwinds!



Sliding Through the Night Sky

By Bill Marvel, the RV-14A guy

Out here in Grand Junction, I have a usual route for taking people on sightseeing flights when the weather is good and the air smooth. It heads southeast down the Uncompahgre plateau, overhead Telluride at about 14,000 feet, a circle around infamous Black Bear Pass, over the Jeep trail high point at Imogene Pass, adjacent to Ouray, across Montrose and the Black Canyon, atop the Grand Mesa and then a descent back to home base at GJT. The trip is very scenic, covers a lot of different terrain and is especially enjoyable for people who don't fly in light airplanes a great deal. That includes an airline pilot friend here on a layover who I flew on that route a few weeks ago. He was amazed he'd forgotten how much beautiful terrain he misses from high altitude.



Night flight focuses more of a pilot's attention on the panel than does its daylight brethren since visual clues are diminished. Plus, illuminated instrument panels, whether of the newer EFIS design or the older six pack, are just plain attractive to look at!

Needless to say, most flying occurs in daylight. After all, that's when we're up and around doing things, including flying airplanes. We generally sleep at night. Sure, some freight haulers and long-distance airline types, as well as military pilots, get a lot of sun-below-the-horizon flying time but not most of us. When you couple that norm with the fact a lot of folks just don't feel safe being in the air at night, particularly in the remote west with little ground lighting and especially in a single engine airplane, you frequently have all the airspace and all the airports to yourself. In my case, that includes the nearby airports at Grand Junction, Delta, Montrose and Paonia. And yet all of these airports have long, paved, lighted runways. Some have sequenced flashing lights, approach lights, runway end identification lights and three have multiple instrument approaches, including ILS and RNAV with LPV minimums. Only Grand Junction has a control tower and it closes at 10 PM. Except for the occasional airline operation at Montrose or Junction, none of these airports has any traffic after sundown!



Lately, however, I've taken a couple of local pilot friends up at night. In part because there is little ground lighting in this area except for a couple of towns, many out here have not flown at night for years. Disorientation is a concern since some headings just lead to blackness in front of the airplane until distant lights become visible. This is an unusual flight for them as it can be a bit spooky. At night, I don't fly over that same Telluride route but stay in the Grand Valley, which encompasses Grand Junction, Delta, Paonia and Montrose, all here in Colorado. It also goes well westward into Utah but there is not much to see at night out there. On these trips we go to different airports, land with and without landing lights, do some touch and goes and an instrument approach or two. I stay night current and they get to do something they haven't done in a while.

Turning final to Montrose runway 35 in the center. Runway 13/31 is visible on the left. With no air traffic, we were able to take off and land in both directions on each runway multiple times. As seen in the photo of Grand junction below, once you leave the vicinity of the airport in Montrose, it gets very dark, very fast.

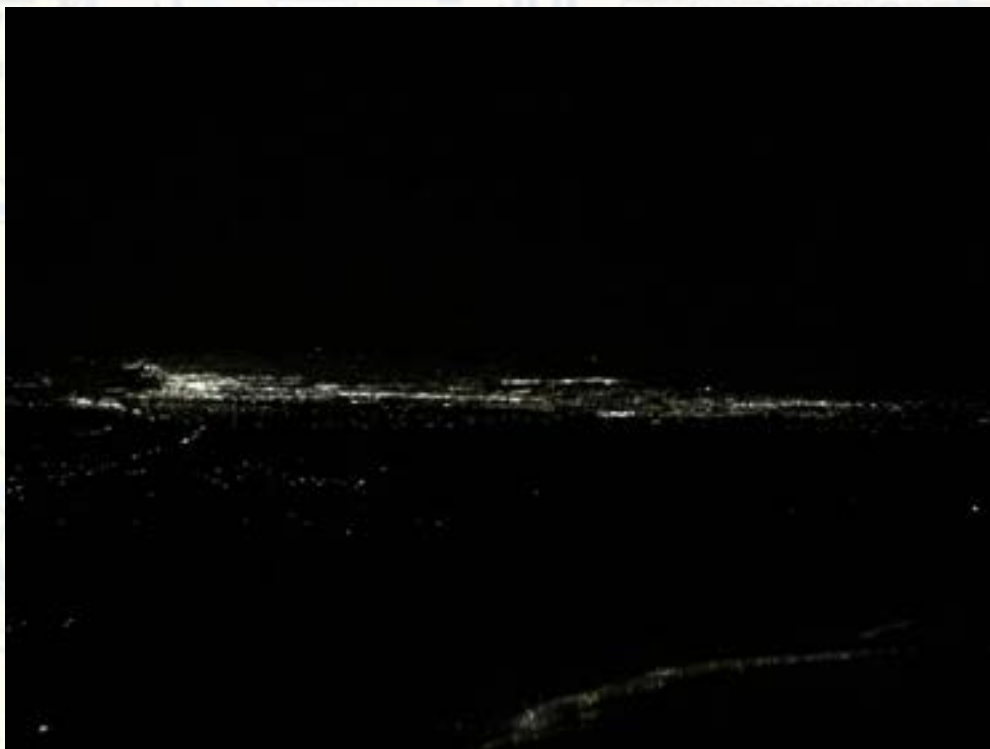


In my view, there are several pluses for night flight, whether for fun and sightseeing, currency, instrument approach practice or basic flight instruction. While I am not a CFI, I’m surprised more training flights do not take place in the night air. It is frequently calm and smooth with good visibility. Daytime heating and related thermal bumps are gone. Conflicting aircraft, if any, are easily seen due to nav lights, strobes and frequently these days, pulsed landing lights. With glass cockpits now common, sunlight glare on displays is not a problem. Want to fly an unusually low or high traffic pattern? Practice a dead stick from 3000 feet over the runway? Take off, do a 180 and land back on the opposite runway? No one is there to complain or get in the way. And for instrument approaches, the instructor can pay a lot more attention to the student and less to the outside world since there isn’t much traffic out there and anything that is can be easily seen from far away. The instructor can play ATC with things like multiple vectors, unplanned holds, changes of destination airport, unusual attitude training etc., much more easily when no one else is competing for your airspace.

Yes, I know many CPA members live in or near larger cities on the front range and busy airports in those areas have a good deal of traffic, both day and night. But it doesn’t take long to fly to an outlying airport that has little to no air traffic and no control tower. And with just about every airport having at least one RNAV approach nowadays, there should be several fields to choose from.

Night flying is a great way to improve your skills, add a new dimension to your aviation pursuits, enjoy the views from aloft from a different perspective and reduce the risks of a mid-air collision. Plus, it’s a lot of fun! And be honest now, have you ever practiced night landings without a landing light? I make some of my best landings in that situation but I don’t know why. How about you?

Of course, there’s the ever present, “but what if the engine quits?” concern. Well, what if you’re in a car wreck on the way to the airport or what if your heart stops beating? Yes, these things do happen but have to be put in perspective in terms of their likelihood of occurrence. That’s for another article. But here’s a hint – the odds of an engine failure are far greater in your imagination than they are under the cowlings and you have significant control over both...



Grand Junction is the largest city in western Colorado. But at night, as seen here on our return from Montrose, it is obviouse how small the city is as well as how black the surrounding terrain gets.



Ask the CFI

By Tammy Raines

When do the fuel gauges need to read correctly?

The often misunderstood portion of the regulation is §23.1337(b)

(1) “Each fuel quantity indicator must be calibrated to read “zero” during level flight when the quantity of fuel remaining in the tank is equal to the unusable fuel supply determined under [Sec. 23.959(a);]”

At first glance, it could be read as “it only needs to be accurate when it is at zero” but this is not

the case. What this portion is trying to clarify is that it needs to read “zero” when the usable fuel is gone even though there may still be “unusable” fuel in the system. It is not saying that is the only time it needs to be accurate.

If we go back to the stem of §23.1337(b), it says, “(b) Fuel quantity indicator. There must be a means to indicate to the flightcrew members the quantity of usable fuel in each tank during flight. An indicator calibrated in appropriate units and clearly marked to indicate those units must be used. In addition—” This seems pretty clear if you don’t skip over it. The indicating system needs to provide an accurate indication to the pilots during flight of how much usable fuel is left in the tanks at all times. There is no specification as to how accurate but it needs to provide an accurate indication.

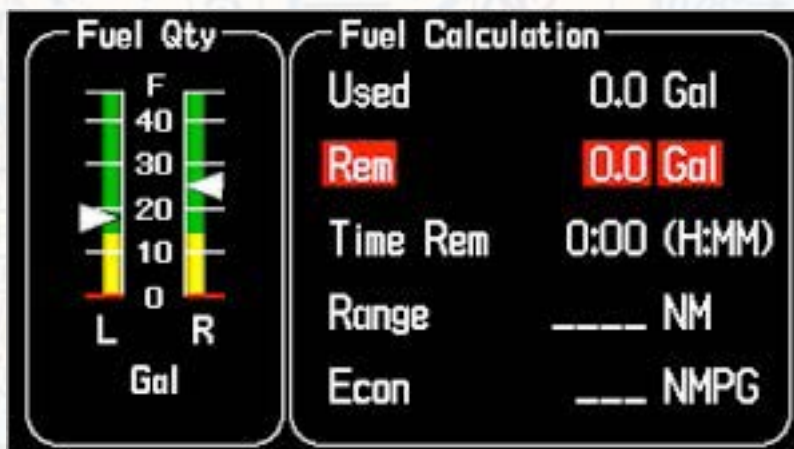
If we look at the more familiar “§91.205 Powered civil aircraft with standard category U.S. airworthiness certificates: Instrument and equipment requirements,” we’ll see a requirement there as well. When we learn to fly, parts of this regulation are often set to memory.

Most student pilots that are approaching their private checkride can tell you that fuel gauges are required for VFR operations. What the regulation actually says is that a “Fuel gauge indicating the quantity of fuel in each tank.” is required. The fact that the gauge is there and showing something is not enough. It must indicate the quantity of fuel in its associated tank.

The Top 10 Leading Causes of Fatal General Aviation Accidents 2001-2016:

1. Loss of Control Inflight
2. Controlled Flight Into Terrain
3. System Component Failure – Powerplant
- 4. Fuel Related**
5. Unknown or Undetermined
6. System Component Failure – Non-Powerplant
7. Unintended Flight In IMC
8. Midair Collisions
9. Low-Altitude Operations
10. Other

[Send your questions to Ask the CFI.](#)



I Love New York

By Frank Ladonne



So, this story goes back to my rather early days of flying; two years after getting my private, before getting my Instrument and the same year we bought our own plane. Looking back, this was a rather ambitious trip at the time.

Naturally, one of the places we knew that we had to fly to since the day I got my license was back to where it all began, Long Island, New York. Fortunately, June of 2010 was my brother's half century birthday and, I guess due to a weak moment on the part of my sister-in-law (which I'm certain she is regretting), we were invited! I immediately began making plans and in a flurry of flight plan activity, mapped out this route:



The plan called for leaving as early in the morning as “the other of us” was willing to get up (not terribly early) flying down the Chicago lakeshore, hang a left at Gary, Indiana, site of the very picturesque abandoned steel mills and continuing on to Youngstown, Ohio, famous for the...uh, Youngstown airport. Quick lunch, gas up and 3 hours later, Long Island.

Okay, so that was the plan. The actuality was that Mother Nature planned to throw some real nastiness at us the morning we were to depart. So instead, we decided to leave right after “the other of us” got home from work, fly to Youngstown, stay the night and fly the remainder the next morning. So, we launched from Waukegan at 6:30 under beautiful clear skies. As planned, we hung our left at Gary and cruised on. By 9:00 (sunset) we had passed Cleveland. Those of you not familiar with Ohio geography and landmarks may be completely unaware of what lies between Cleveland and Youngstown. Let me educate you – **NOTHING**. At least nothing that emits even a photon of light. So, motoring along in pitch blackness (and the glow of the instruments and GPS) with complete confidence in my “PICness” we radioed Youngstown airport when we were 20 miles out. Our call was met by a very friendly (and bored) indeed ATC guy. We subsequently began our descent and our ATC buddy gave us a hearty “Clear to land!” I responded with, “that’s very good and encouraging but could you turn the runway lights on so I can see WHERE I’m clear to land.” Boy that was met by some boisterous laughing. (I suspect this kinda stuff is WAY funnier when sitting in a swivel chair than in an airplane). Suddenly the airport appeared in all its blazing glory. We landed, taxied to the FBO (which we knew ahead of time would be closed) and apparently, that was the event of the day because all the runway lights went off and the airport was effectively closed.

Now, this next part may not be politically correct so, those of you who are sensitive are advised to read this next part with your eyes closed. I’ll tell you when you can open them again. One of the things I’ve included in my passenger briefing is that “I’ve been all the way to the back of my plane and haven’t yet found a bathroom so I’d advise you to go now before we leave”. One of the enduring mysteries of flying is that no matter how far you’re going, you inevitably have to pee about a half hour before getting there. Flying being what it is, it’s not like you can just pull over to the side of the road. Well, this trip was no exception. In fact, one of



the challenges of landing at Youngstown was uncrossing my legs so I could work the rudder pedals.

So, landed we were. I got out a penlight and we began to button the plane up for the night and put its cover on. When we were done, we both walked around the plane to ensure we hadn't forgotten anything. It was then that I heard Jolene exclaim, “Oh no, we have a problem. There's a puddle. The back of the plane is leaking!” Assuring her that the puddle was caused not by the back of the plane but the front of the pilot made her feel marginally better.

(Okay, you can open your eyes now.)

The next morning, we launched for Long Island. Beautiful day but the cloud cover was forecast to become denser the further east we went. Bridgeport, Connecticut, where we planned to hang our right to cross Long Island Sound was forecast to be a broken layer (5/8-7/8 cloud cover). As we crossed the Hudson River at Ossining, we got a good view of the Tappan Zee Bridge.



We were beginning to feel at home, having traversed that bridge hundreds of times. Coming up on Bridgeport, it was tending more towards the 7/8 part of the broken definition but we could see that there was a similar cloud layer over Long Island but nothing over Long Island Sound. Before hanging our right, here's what it looked like from where I sat.



I told Jolene, “Okay, here's the plan, we make our turn, we contact Macarthur and we descend while crossing Long Island Sound. When we get to the other side, we are under the cloud layer and we land.

So, I made my turn, contacted Islip, Macarthur and began my descent. Boy, I'll tell you! Sometimes things work out just like you planned and make you look really smart. This was one of those times.

Even though seeing Long Island was a thrill, hearing the NY accent and the NY “attitude” from the NY air traffic controller really made me feel at home. Islip Macarthur, you'll know, is a large commercial airport. They handle 160,000 landings and departures a year and it is a major hub for Southwest. Well, as we were on our downwind leg (heading South), there was a Southwest Boeing 737 on final. Now, it is common that air traffic control (ATC) will try to separate a small plane from landing after a big one by 3 minutes or so to avoid what is called “wake turbulence” which could cause the smaller plane to tumble (apparently, they don't like the loud noise that a small plane landing upside down creates). So, as I was talking to Islip ATC and he told me, “ah, Cessna 179 X-ray Pop (that's me), extend your downwind to avoid wake turbulence”. I expected this and he was telling me to keep going the way I was going for awhile to allow the vortexes created by the 737 to dissipate. After what seemed like a long while and with the Southwest long on the ground, I was beginning to leave Long Island and head out over the ocean to Florida. I thought that perhaps ATC had forgotten about me (which, BTW happens more often than you might think). So, I called and said, “ah, Islip Tower, this is 179 X-ray Pop, I'd like to begin my base turn”. (BTW, in case you were wondering, you have to preface your communications with that “ah”, it makes you



sound very pilot-like.)

Now, ATC, over the entire country is very emotionless and professional. Not so, New York.

ATC shot right back with “ah, X-ray Pop, alright, I told you about the wake turbulence; do whatever you want, clear to land”.

Oh boy! We were in New York.

Great landing and here’s my Southwest buddy.



Are you Social?

The CPA is looking for folks to help with their online presence in the social media space. The purpose of this role (or if done individually) is to help further the online presence of the Colorado Pilots Association and provide a path of communication of what is going on within the CPA itself. Right now we need help with all of the social media aspects, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn and if you’re a budding videographer, we’d love to get into the YouTube space a bit more. These are volunteer positions helping to move aviation in Colorado forward.

So if you are savvy in one or more of these areas, please let us know at webmaster@coloradopilots.org and we’ll be happy to chat with you.

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Airport Facts:

Eagle Country Regional Airport in Eagle was ranked #8 on the History Channel's list of Most Extreme Airports in July 2010. The #1 destination for air carrier service out of Eagle is Dalls/Fort Worth.

Montrose Regional Airport's #1 destination for air carrier service was Denver followed closely by Dallas/Fort Worth.

Denver International Airport has over 5300 miles of fiber optic cable for local intranet.



Catching up....

[Blog by Brian Garrett Briangarrett.net](https://www.briangarrett.net)



It's been a little over a couple of months since my last update and a lot has happened in that time. The biggest news of all is the wait is over! On July 8th we took delivery of the empennage kit, the wing kit and the fuselage kit. All in all it was 5 very large boxes and a couple of longer tubes. The delivery driver actually works for a company that specializes in shipment of aircraft parts and has a few decades of experience in doing it. He clearly loves his job.

When the shipping company called me to let me know the delivery was underway, they gave me an ETA of



about an hour until it would arrive, so I headed out for a quick walk. I was about 15 min into my walk when I got a call saying “the driver is here”. Not a big deal in the end, but it was just kinda funny about the disconnect between the driver and the dispatch center.

Overall we are making great progress. We are missing a number of one-off parts which is preventing us from completing pretty much each of the sections. The missing parts are all on order and should be in reasonably soon. But we aren't waiting. We'll clear off some room once we have finished cleaning the surfaces and tidied up the parts we have and then start working on the wings! We'll have a new update coming up in September. For those of you not watching our YouTube channel, I'm going to try to keep that up to date as well. This was our introductory video which mirrors much of the same details mentioned here, but in a video format.



Follow along as Brian and Laurie build their airplane. Visit Brian's blog at <https://www.briangarrett.net/the-first-rivet/archives> and see more at [Youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com)





Brian Christian

C45 departing Meadow Lake Airport.

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